

WT07-89, Continued

8. SIGNIFICANCE: Will Ducker was born in England and went to Illinois to work for his older brothers in their store. He was well educated and had a love for learning. He came to Red Cloud at the age of 50 where he gave lessons in the classics to his children to supplement their regular schoolwork. Willa spent time reading with him both while she lived in Red Cloud and after she had moved to Lincoln to attend the University.

" . . . Upon moving from the farm into Red Cloud in 1884, she began to read Latin with 'Uncle William Ducker,' not a relative but a well-educated Englishman who took an interest in her. Six years later, at the University, she took more Latin and Greek, and during the summers she and her brother Roscoe read Virgil. Evidence of classical influences in her work have been pointed out by many critics." (Bennett: 1961, p. 119).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Acreage: Less than one acre  
UTM Coordinate: 14/E540260/N4438035

Verbal Boundary Description: Annex lot 8, Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska

WT07-91

- 1. NAME: Dr. Gilbert E. McKeeby house  
"Dr. Archie's house"
- 2. LOCATION: 641 No. Cherry street
- 4. OWNER: Dwight and Teresa Bender  
ADDRESS: 641 No. Cherry Street, Red Cloud, Nebraska 68970

82-4937

7. DESCRIPTION: The McKeeby house was built ca. 1883 on several lots in the western suburbs of Red Cloud. The dwelling is a distinct, one-and-one-half story ell-shaped frame house with multiple rear additions. Detailing is distinctly Victorian in character including the porch supports, the bracketed bay window centered on the front gable and the wood cut-out window trim. The house is exceptionally well-preserved--its Victorian paint color scheme contributing much to the overall ambience of the property (photo #34).

8. SIGNIFICANCE: The McKeeby house is significant to the major theme of the Cather nomination. Dr. G. E. McKeeby was one of Willa's first adult friends. He was a graduate of Bellevue Hospital Medical College in New York City and practiced medicine for 14 years. He moved to the drier climate of Nebraska because of poor health. He began practicing law in Red Cloud but switched back to medicine after a short while. Willa occasionally went on calls with him.

McKeeby was the prototype for "Dr. Archie" in Song of the Lark. His house is also described in the novel:

"Dr. Archie was very proud of his yard and garden, which he worked himself. He was the only man in Moonstone who was successful at growing rambler roses, and his strawberries were famous." ( The Song of the Lark, p. 32).

**WT07-91, Continued**

"It was his wife's custom, as soon as Dr. Archie left the house in the morning, to shut all the doors and windows to keep the dust out, and to pull down the shades to keep the sun from fading the carpets. She thought, too, that neighbors were less likely to drop in if the house was closed up. She was one of those people who are stingy without motive or reason, even when they can gain nothing by it. She must have known that skimping the doctor in heat and food made him more extravagant than he would have been had she made him comfortable." ( The Song of the Lark, p. 33).

"Mrs. Archie, as Mrs. Kronborg said, 'liked to gad.' She liked to have her house clean, empty, dark, locked, and to be out of it—anywhere. A church social, a prayer meeting, a ten-cent show; she seemed to have no preference. . . she knew all the gossip of the town and she had a sharp ear for racy anecdotes—'traveling men's stories,' they used to be called in Moonstone." ( The Song of the Lark, p. 34).

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

Acreege: Less than one acre  
UTM Coordinate: 14/E540390/N4437830

Verbal Boundary Description: Lots 1-3, block 2, Radcliff's Addition to the City of Red Cloud, Webster County, Nebraska.

**WT07-100**

- 1. NAME: Grace Protestant Episcopal Church
- 2. LOCATION: 546 No. Cedar, Red Cloud, Webster County
- 4. OWNER: State of Nebraska-Historical Society
- ADDRESS: 1500 R Street, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508

82-4931

7. DESCRIPTION: Grace Protestant Episcopal Church was built under the direction of the Reverend Mr. Crockett in 1884. As originally constructed, the frame church was located on a corner lot at Second and Walnut. In 1891 the church was moved to its present location and placed upon a raised basement. Sometime after 1922 the brick veneer was added to the building, over the original clapboards (photo #35).

As presently situated, the church is a simple gabled rectangle whose nave is three bays long. A square apse is attached to the east and a rectangular entrance vestibule is attached to the west end. A small sacristy with shed roof is attached to the south end of the apse. Fenestration is lancet arched with painted, stained glass windows imported from Munich. The lancet arched entrance features double doors, vertically paneled, with a painted glass transom above. An oculus in the upper west gable is also painted, stained glass.